

**Testimony of Kaleen Deatherage
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**To Chairman Mark Souder
Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources**

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Chairman Souder, Congressman Walden thank you for holding this public hearing on the important public health issue of methamphetamine prevention and treatment. My name is Kaleen Deatherage, and I am the Director of Public Policy and Community Programs for Oregon Partnership, Oregon's only statewide non-profit organization that provides substance abuse prevention education and treatment referral.

I know that both of you have heard and read a great deal about the tremendous toll methamphetamine is taking on Oregon's rural and urban communities. The manufacture and use of meth continues to harm families, our environment and the most innocent among us – our children. And it is placing a tremendous burden on our law enforcement and criminal justice systems.

Helping children, families and neighborhoods overcome the scourge of meth requires consistent public investment in a multi-pronged strategy: prevention that stops meth manufacturing and use before it starts, substance abuse treatment that heals people who struggle with addiction, and law enforcement that helps maintain community livability. It is, in effect, a three-legged stool that works only if each component exists.

The goal of the alcohol and drug abuse prevention component is to make a positive impact on individual, family and community behavior. We have an existing prevention knowledge base, founded on research and principles of effectiveness, which should guide the prevention strategies applied by agencies and communities across our nation to address this issue.

I would like to point out several research-based alcohol and other drug prevention strategies that have shown the greatest potential to create positive behavior change.

- Helping young people to recognize internal pressures, such as wanting to belong to the group, and external pressures, like peer attitudes and advertising that influence them to use alcohol and drugs.
- Teaching youth that using alcohol and other drugs is not the norm among teenagers, thereby correcting the misconception that "everyone is doing it" and promoting positive norms through establishing constructive role models.
- Actively involving the family and the community so that prevention strategies are reinforced across settings.
- Facilitating the development of personal, social and refusal skills to resist pressures that may lead to use of alcohol and other drugs.

In addition, the field of alcohol and other drug prevention has identified evidence-based principles that can be applied to existing programs or utilized to develop innovative new programs to effectively impact individual, family and community behavior.

- Prevention programs should target all forms of drug abuse
- Prevention programs should be designed to enhance protective factors and reduce known risk factors
- Prevention programs should include skills to resist drugs when offered, strengthen personal commitments against drug use and increase social competency in conjunction with reinforcement of attitudes against drug use.
- Prevention programs should include a parent or caregiver component that reinforces what the children are learning – such as facts about drugs and their harmful effects. This creates opportunities for family discussions about the use of legal and illegal substances and encourages family policies about their use.
- Prevention programs should be long-term, over the entire school career with repeat interventions to reinforce the original prevention goals.
- Community programs need to strengthen norms against drug use in all drug abuse prevention settings, including the family, the school and the community.
- Prevention programming should be adapted to address the specific nature of the drug abuse problem in the local community, while also being age-specific, developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive.

This summer, Oregon took a big step forward in efforts to address the methamphetamine crisis. With the leadership of Oregon's Governor, strong support from state lawmakers and invaluable groundwork by the Governor's Meth Task Force, on which I had the opportunity to have a role, legislation was signed that requires prescriptions for cold medications containing pseudoephedrine, the key ingredient in meth. The legislation also strengthens law enforcement and provides greater resources for drug courts and substance abuse treatment programs, which have proven to heal individuals and families.

As the work of the Oregon Legislature this session clearly demonstrated, Oregon's meth crisis transcends politics and requires that all segments of the community work together. While new tools will now be available to law enforcement to address meth manufacture and use, communities statewide also need to use the prevention principles of effectiveness to develop broad-based strategies to fight the ongoing meth epidemic. Oregon Partnership is committed to providing new prevention resources and tools to assist communities in their efforts.

In a collaborative venture, Oregon Partnership and Southern Oregon Public Television are developing a campaign titled, "***Target Meth: Building a Vision for a Drug-Free Community.***" This strategic response to the meth epidemic will incorporate a statewide media and community training campaign designed to educate Oregon residents on the problems and dangers associated with methamphetamine manufacture and use in Oregon.

The ***Target Meth*** campaign will deliver cutting-edge information to communities through a complete multi-media campaign consisting of four major components. The first is a

master Methamphetamine Training PowerPoint, which will allow the user to customize local presentations by selecting from meth subject matter slides including Meth 101, How Does Meth Affect Me, and Meth Prevention, Treatment and Enforcement. Each slide will have talking points and suggested combinations of slides to target specific audiences such as business leaders, parents and youth.

To accompany the training PowerPoint, Oregon Partnership is producing a ***Target Meth*** Community Action Guide. This guide will provide community coalitions, business leaders, faith-based organizations, parent groups and other community leaders with science-based prevention practices, techniques for neighborhood involvement and community mobilization, assistance for families dealing with drug addiction and a link to resources by county.

Oregon Partnership and Southern Oregon Public Television are co-producing three 30-minute ***Target Meth*** specials focusing on the “big picture” in relation to meth law enforcement, treatment and prevention issues. Each special will be designed to air with a local companion piece that focuses on specific regions of Oregon and provides local data along with regional scenarios of meth manufacture and use.

The last component of the campaign is a ***Target Meth*** Information Portal. This Web-based “resource library” will provide Oregon methamphetamine information, programming and downloadable tools. Prevention and treatment organizations, agencies and coalitions across Oregon will be able to link from their web sites to the information portal, providing on-demand access and video streaming of meth programming, public service announcements and interviews. In addition, the portal will include video clips from statewide media coverage, resource links, state and local meth statistics and other pertinent information relating to Oregon’s methamphetamine awareness efforts.

The ***Target Meth: Building a Vision for a Drug-Free Community*** PowerPoint, Community Guide and Web Information Portal will be available this November from Oregon Partnership. The ***Target Meth*** television specials will begin airing in early 2006. Regional Training of Trainers on the ***Target Meth*** Campaign will be held statewide beginning in January. The goal of these workshops will be to help community leaders utilize the components of the campaign and integrate these tools into local drug prevention planning.

Oregon Partnership is excited that citizens from all walks of life are joining together to fight the meth epidemic—from representatives of law enforcement, treatment, community coalitions, education, prevention and the news media to the average citizen on the street. The good news is that we know that prevention works. The National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that every dollar invested in prevention programs saves \$10 in enforcement and treatment.

I want to thank you, Chairman Souder and Congressman Walden for your leadership on the Federal level to address the devastation meth is causing across America. Thanks to you there is encouragement for families and communities struggling with meth. Thank

you both for all you are doing to teach Congress about the growing devastation caused by Meth and the societal costs involved. Here in Oregon, we have asked all of our citizens to participate in stopping a threat to their safety, health, economy and environment, and the best news of all is that as a result of our on-going efforts Oregon is starting to see success in the fight against meth and hope is returning to individuals and families across our state.